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## **CONSUMER ALERT**

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**Tennessee Attorney General Announces Participation in Multistate Safety Inquiry and  
Urges Consumers to Check Tire Numbers for Potentially Dangerous Recalled Tires**

Tennessee Attorney General Bob Cooper, Division of Consumer Affairs Director Mary Clement, and a number of other State Attorneys General are warning consumers about some potentially dangerous tires. These tires were sold from 2002 to 2006 for light trucks, sports utility vehicles (SUVs), and vans.

The tires that Foreign Tires Sales, Inc. ("FTS") have identified as potentially dangerous were made by Hangzhou Zhongce Rubber Co. Ltd. ("HZ") in China and distributed in the United States under these names:

7	Westlake
7	Compass
7	YKS

On June 11, 2007, FTS filed a Non-compliance Report on the subject tires with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ("NHTSA") claiming that at least 270,000 tires are without or with insufficient "gum strips," an important part of a tire related to the prevention of tread separation. The NHTSA report is available for inspection at:

<http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/acms/docservlet/Artemis/Public/Recalls/2007/T/RC DNN-07T003-4981.pdf>. More than 13,000 of the potentially unsafe tires are believed to have been sold or distributed in Tennessee. FTS has reported that the following locations in Tennessee could have sold or distributed the tires, but there may be others:

1. Disney Tire & Rubber, last known address 1125 8th Avenue S., Nashville, TN.
2. Dunlap & Kyle Tire Company, also known as Gateway Tire & Service Centers  
See <http://www.dktire.com/stores/tn/default.htm> for Tennessee locations
3. FreeService Tire Company, Inc.; e <http://www.freeservicetire.com> for Tennessee locations.
4. Tennessee Farmers' Co-Op; see <http://ourcoop.com> for locations.

“To protect yourself and your family, I want to urge consumers to check their vehicles’ tires to make sure they are not driving on potentially unsafe tires and to determine if there are any signs of tread separation,” Attorney General Cooper said.

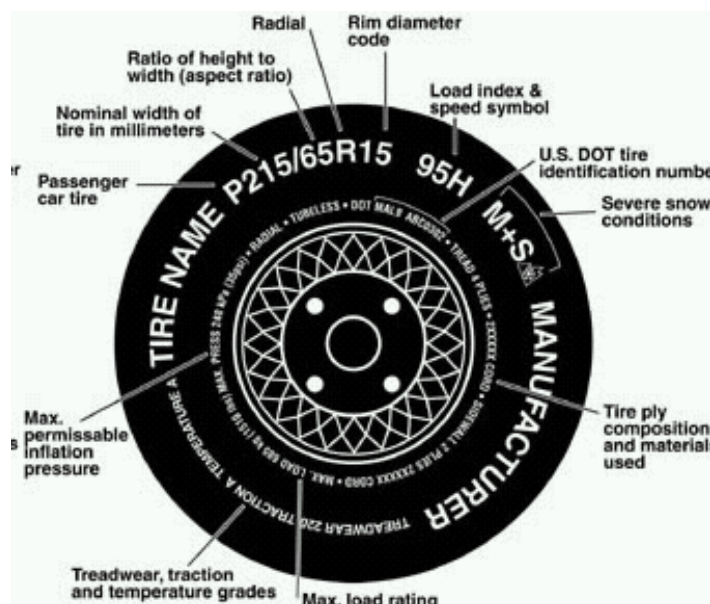
Because of safety concerns involved with potentially defective FTS tires, a multistate working group of Attorneys General has been created to investigate the concerns and to monitor this entire process. Tennessee is serving on the executive committee of the working group for this investigation.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY THE TIRES OF POTENTIAL CONCERN

Consumers should check the sidewalls of their tires for the brand name, size, model, and DOT number. If the DOT number contains “FTS” as part of the number, the tire may be subject to a future recall. Affected tires also will contain a tire size starting with “LT,” as well as a DOT number that starts with “7D” and ends in either “02,” “03,” “04,” or “05.” Further information can be obtained from FTS’s web site at [www.foreigntire.com](http://www.foreigntire.com).

Specific tire numbers and sizes affected by this inquiry are as follows:

LT235/75R-15 CR861 CR857



LT 245 / 75 R - 16  
CR860 CR861 CR857  
LT 225 / 75 R - 16  
CR861  
LT 265 / 75 R - 16  
CR860 CR861 CR857  
LT 235 / 85 R - 16  
CR860 CR861 CR857  
LT 31 X 10.5 R - 15  
CR861 CR857

The “LT” in front of the number stands for “light truck.” The picture used here is of a passenger tire. A light truck tire will have “LT” instead of the “P” shown in the picture. “LT” tires are also used on sport

utility vehicles and vans.

“235” represents the width of the tire in millimeters. “85” is the ratio of height to width. “R” stands for “radial,” and the “16” is the diameter of the wheel in inches. The letters “DOT” are meant to certify compliance with the applicable safety standards established by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Adjacent to the letters “DOT” is a tire identification or serial number. This serial number is a code with up to 12 digits that are a combination of numbers and letters. The last characters are numbers identifying the week and year of manufacture. (Example: “1501” means the 15th week of the year 2001.)

If you have any of the tires described above, you should immediately contact the dealer where you bought the tires. If that dealer is more than 50 miles from you, contact another tire dealer to have your tires inspected.

If an inspection indicates that your tires may be unsafe, immediately contact the Division of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-342-8385 (toll-free inside Tennessee), (615) 741-4737, or online at [www.state.tn.us/consumer](http://www.state.tn.us/consumer), as well as Foreign Tire Sales, Inc. and NHTSA and report the problem. At this time, NHTSA has not called for a recall on any of these tires, and no replacement tire program has been instituted. FTS officials have said an official recall of at least some of the tires may begin in early August. Once those details are made available, the Tennessee Attorney General will issue a release with information about any recall or replacement program that may be instituted. The dealer where you purchased the tires should also have information available shortly. In addition, you may visit Foreign Tire Sales’ web site at [www.foreignfire.com](http://www.foreignfire.com) to register affected tires and obtain information related to a recall. A toll free number for consumers and tire dealers will be established.

### **WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE COMPLAINTS**

Consumers who live in Tennessee or who purchased the specified tires in Tennessee and have complaints about the recalled tires or any other consumer matter should contact the Division of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-342-8385 (toll-free inside Tennessee), (615) 741-4737, or online at [www.state.tn.us/consumer](http://www.state.tn.us/consumer). If you have had an accident as a result of a defective tire, you should immediately contact the Division of Consumer Affairs using the same contact information and file a report with the NHTSA by calling their Vehicle Safety Hotline Toll-Free at 1-888-327-4236; TTY 1-800-424-9153. You may also want to talk with a private attorney, because you have a limited amount of time in which to file a lawsuit.

### **TIRE SAFETY TIPS**

As part of general tire safety, Attorney General Cooper and Director Clement want to remind consumers to keep the following tire safety tips in mind:

\*At least once a month and before every long trip, inspect tires for patterns of uneven wear that could damage tires. Check tire inflation pressure in accordance with manufacturer recommendations. Also check that there is no beginning separation between the tire treads and the body of the tire.

- \*Do not overload your vehicle. Excess weight can place extra stress on your tires. Check your tire placard or vehicle owner's manual for the maximum amount of weight your vehicle can safely carry.
- \*Develop safe driving habits. Observe speed limits and avoid fast stops, starts, and turns. When possible avoid contact with potholes, objects, and curbs when driving or parking your vehicle.
- \*Keep your vehicle properly maintained. Rotate tires regularly, get wheels balanced, and get a front-end alignment as necessary.
- \*Use the proper tires for your vehicle. Check the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations before replacing a tire with a different size and/or construction.
- \*Be aware of how the outside temperature affects your tires. Hot weather can be especially hard on tires, causing them to expand. As the outside temperature drops 10 degrees, tire pressure drops about one or two pounds per square inch.
- \*Have any tire problems checked out by professionals. If you find that one of your tires is losing pressure, take it to a tire expert for a complete internal inspection.
- \*Be careful of buying used tires. It is possible that some used tire dealers may try to capitalize on this situation by re-selling tires subject to this inquiry or other recalls that have been replaced and are supposed to be destroyed. Though unethical and hazardous, it has happened before. Check used tire numbers and do not buy any that are specified in this inquiry or subject to a prior recall.

Additional tire safety information can be found at the NHTSA web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/TireSafety/ridesonit/brochure.html>.